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OFFICE OF CHIEF OF COUNSEL FOR WAR CRIMES

EVIDENCE DIVISION

Date: 20 July 1948

I certify that Document Number 3268-PS was introduced into evidence as Exhibit Number USA-356 in the Trial by the International Tribunal of Hermann GOERING, et al, which commenced on 20 November 1945, and that the attached photostat is a true and correct copy of the original.

Fred Wiebergall

FRED WIEBERGALL
Chief, Document Control Branch

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the annexed document 3268-PS No. USA - 356 is a photostat of an original document submitted in evidence by the United States Prosecution under this number. The original document has been withdrawn in accordance with Rule 10 of the International Military Tribunal, and to the best of my knowledge and belief is to be held at the National Archives, Washington D.C. .

Paul Joosten

Nuremberg, 28 June 1948

PAUL A. JOOSTEN

General Secretary
International Military
Tribunal

H2900 – 0004

Parts enclosed in red:
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3268-PS

ALLOCUTION

OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XII

TO THE SACRED COLLEGE

JUNE 2nd, 1945

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL
NUREMBERG, GERMANY
USA Exhibit 356
Filed Dec 17, 1945

TIPOGRAFIA POLIGLOTTA VATICANA
1945

Printed by the Vatican Polyglot Press.

An address to the Cardinals, - cited on following day in press of the world.

Brought from the Vatican, Nov. 3, 1945
Edmund A. Walsh

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Parts enclosed in red:

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3268-PS

ALLOCUTION

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TO THE SACRED COLLEGE

JUNE 2nd, 1945

As We very gratefully acknowledge, Venerable Brethren, the good wishes which the venerable and beloved Dean of the Sacred College has offered to Us on your behalf, Our thoughts bring Us back to this day six years ago when you offered your congratulations on Our feast-day for the first time after We, though unworthy, had been raised to the See of Peter.

The world was then still at peace: but what a peace, and how very precarious! With a heart full of anguish, perplexed, praying We bent over that peace like one that assists a dying man and fights obstinately to save him from death even when all hope is gone.

The message which We then addressed to you reflected Our sorrowful apprehension that the conflict, which was ever growing more menacing, would break out—a conflict whose extent and duration nobody could foresee.

The subsequent march of events has not only justified all too clearly Our saddest premonitions, but has has far surpassed them.

To-day, after six years, the fratricidal struggle has ended at least in one section of this war-torn world. It is a peace—if you can call it such—as yet very fragile, which cannot endure or be consolidated except by expending on it the most assiduous care; a peace whose maintenance imposes on the whole Church, both Pastor and faithful, grave and very delicate duties: patient prudence, courageous fidelity, the spirit of sacrifice! All are called upon to devote themselves to it, each in his own office and at his own place. Nobody can bring to this task too much anxiety or zeal.

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As to Us and Our Apostolic ministry, We well know, Venerable Brethren, that We can safely count on your sage collaboration, your unceasing prayers, your steadfast devotion.

I – The Church and National-Socialism

In Europe, the war is over: but what wounds has it not inflicted! Our divine Master had said: All those who unjustly take up the sword shall perish by the sword (cfr. *Matt.* 26, 52). Now what do you see?

You see what is the result of a concept of the State reduced to practice which takes no heed of the most sacred ideals of mankind, which overthrows the inviolable principles of the Christian faith. The whole world to-day contemplates with stupefaction the ruins that it has left behind it.

These ruins We had seen when they were still in the distant future, and few, We believe, have followed with greater anxiety the process leading to the inevitable crash. For over twelve years—twelve of the best years of Our mature age—We had lived in the midst of the German people, fulfilling the duties of the office committed to Us. During that time, in the atmosphere of liberty which the political and social conditions of that time allowed Us, We worked for the consolidation of the status of the Catholic Church in Germany. We thus had occasion to learn the great qualities of that people and We were personally in close contact with its most representative men. For that reason We cherish the hope that it can rise to new dignity and new life when once it has laid the satanic spectre raised by National-Socialism and the guilty (as We have already, at other times had occasion to expound) have expiated the crimes they have committed.

While there was still some faint glimmer of hope that that movement could take another and less disastrous course, either through the disillusionment of its more moderate members or through effective opposition from that section of the German people which opposed it, the Church did everything possible to set up a formidable barrier to the spread of ideas at once subversive and violent.

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In spring 1933 the German Government asked the Holy See to conclude a Concordat with the Reich: the proposal had the approval of the Episcopate and of at least the greater number of German Catholics. In fact they thought that neither the Concordats up to then negotiated with some individual German States (*Länder*) nor the Weimar Constitution gave adequate guarantee or assurance of respect for their convictions, for their faith, rights or liberty of action. In such conditions the guarantees could not be secured except through a settlement having the solemn form of a Concordat with the Central Government of the Reich. It should be added that, since it was the Government that made the proposal, the responsibility for all regrettable consequences would have fallen on the Holy See, if it had refused the proposed Concordat.

It was not that the Church, for her part, had any illusions built on excessive optimism, or that, in concluding the Concordat, she had the intention of giving any form of approval to the teachings or tendencies of National-Socialism; this was expressly declared and explained at the time (cfr. *L'Osservatore Romano*, No. 174, July 2nd, 1933). It must, however, be recognized that the Concordat, in the years that followed, brought some advantages, or at least prevented worse evils. In fact, in spite of all the violations to which it was subjected, it gave Catholics a juridical basis for their defence, a stronghold behind which to shield themselves in their opposition—as long as this was possible—to the ever growing campaign of religious persecution.

The struggle against the Church did, in fact, become ever more bitter: there was the dissolution of Catholic organizations; the gradual suppression of the flourishing Catholic schools, both public and private; the enforced weaning of youth from family and Church; the pressure brought to bear on the conscience of citizens, and especially of civil servants; the systematic defamation, by means of a clever, closely-organized propaganda, of the Church, the clergy, the faithful, the Church's institutions, teaching and history; the closing, dissolution, confiscation of religious houses and other ecclesiastical institutions; the complete suppression of the Catholic press and publishing houses.

To resist such attacks millions of courageous Catholics, men

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and women, closed their ranks around their bishops, whose valiant and severe pronouncements never failed to resound even in these last years of war. These Catholics gathered around their priests to help them adapt their ministry to the ever-changing needs and conditions. And, right up to the end, they set up against the forces of impiety and pride their forces of faith, prayer, and openly Catholic behaviour and education.

In the meantime the Holy See itself multiplied its representations and protests to governing authorities in Germany, reminding them, in clear and energetic language, of their duty to respect and fulfil the obligations of the natural law itself that were confirmed by the Concordat. In those critical years, joining the alert vigilance of a Pastor to the long-suffering patience of a father, Our great Predecessor Pius XI fulfilled his mission as Supreme Pontiff with intrepid courage.

But when, after he had tried all means of persuasion in vain, he saw himself clearly faced with deliberate violations of a solemn pact, with a religious persecution masked or open, but always rigourously organized, he proclaimed to the world, on Passion Sunday 1937, in his Encyclical "*Mit brennender Sorge*," what National-Socialism really was: the arrogant apostasy from Jesus Christ, the denial of His doctrine and of His work of redemption, the cult of violence, the idolatry of race and blood, the overthrow of human liberty and dignity.

* * *

Like a clarion-call that sounds the alarm, the Papal document with its vigorous terms—too vigorous, thought more than one at the time—startled the minds and hearts of men.

Many—even beyond the frontiers of Germany—who up to then had closed their eyes to the incompatibility of the National-Socialist viewpoint with the teachings of Christ, had to recognize and confess their mistake.

Many—but not all! Some, even among the faithful themselves, were too blinded by their prejudices or allured by political advantage. The evidence of the facts brought forward by Our Predecessor did not convince them, much less induce them to change their

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ways. Is it mere chance that some regions, which later suffered more from the National-Socialist system, were precisely those where the Encyclical "*Mit brennender Sorge*" was less, or not at all heeded?

Would it then have been possible, by opportune and timely political action, to block once and for all the outbreak of brutal violence and to put the German people in the position to shake off the tentacles that were strangling it? Would it have been possible thus to have saved Europe and the world from this immense inundation of blood? Nobody would dare to give an unqualified judgment. But in any case nobody could accuse the Church of not having denounced and exposed in time the true nature of the National-Socialist movement and the danger to which it exposed Christian civilization.

* * *

"Whoever sets up race, or the people, or the State, or a particular form of State, or the depositories of power, or any other fundamental value of the human community... to be the supreme norm of all, even of religious values, and divinizes them to an idolatrous level, distorts and perverts an order of the world planned and created by God" (cfr. *Acta Apost. Sedis*, vol. XXIX, 1937, pp. 149 and 171).

The radical opposition of the National-Socialist State to the Catholic Church is summed up in this declaration of the Encyclical. When things had reached this point, the Church could not, without foregoing her mission, any longer refuse to take her stand before the whole world. But by doing so she became once again "a sign which shall be contradicted" (*Luke*, 2, 34), in the presence of which contrasting opinions divided off into two opposed camps.

German Catholics were, one may say, at one in recognizing that the Encyclical "*Mit brennender Sorge*" had brought light, direction, consolation and comfort to all those who seriously meditated and conscientiously practised the religion of Christ. But the reaction of those who had been inculpated was inevitable, and in fact that very year 1937 was for the Catholic Church in Germany a year of indescribable bitterness and terrible outbreaks.

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The important political events which marked the two following years and then the war did not bring any attenuation in the hostility of National-Socialism towards the Church, a hostility which was manifest up to these last months when National-Socialists still flattered themselves with the idea that, once they had secured victory in arms, they could do away with the Church for ever. Authoritative and absolutely trustworthy witnesses kept Us informed of these plans—they unfolded themselves, actually, in the reiterated and ever more intense activity against the Church in Austria, Alsace-Lorraine and above all in those parts of Poland which had already been incorporated in the old Reich during the war : there everything was attacked, destroyed—that is, everything that could be reached by external violence.

Continuing the work of Our Predessor, We Ourselves have during the war, and especially in Our Radio-messages, constantly set forth the demands and perennial laws of humanity and of the Christian faith, in contrast with the ruinous and inexorable applications of National-Socialist teachings which even went so far as to use the most exquisite scientific methods to torture or eliminate people who were often innocent. This was for Us the most opportune—and We might even say the only— efficacious way of proclaiming before the world the immutable principles of the moral law and of confirming, in the midst of so much error and violence, the minds and hearts of German Catholics in the higher ideals of truth and justice. And Our solicitude was not without its effect. Indeed We know that Our messages, and especially that of Christmas 1942, despite every prohibition and obstacle, were studied in the diocesan clergy conferences in Germany and then expounded and explained to the Catholic population.

If the rulers of Germany had decided to destroy the Catholic Church even in the old Reich, Providence had decided otherwise. The tribulations inflicted on the Church by National-Socialism have been brought to an end through the sudden and tragic end of the persecutor!

From the prisons, concentration camps and fortresses are now pouring out, together with the political prisoners, also the crowds of those, whether clergy or laymen, whose only crime was their

fidelity to Christ and to the faith of their fathers or the dauntless fulfilment of their duties as priests. For them all We have prayed and have seized every opportunity, whenever the occasion offered, to send them a word of comfort and blessing from Our paternal heart.

Indeed the more the veils are drawn which up to now hid the sorrowful passion of the Church under the National-Socialist régime, the more apparent becomes the strength, often steadfast unto death, of numberless Catholics, and the glorious share in that noble contest which belonged to the clergy. Although as yet not in possession of the complete statistics, We cannot refrain from recalling here, by way of example, some details from the abundant accounts which have reached Us from priests and laymen who were interned in the concentration camp of Dachau and were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus (*Acts* 5, 41).

In the forefront, for the number and harshness of the treatment meted out to them, are the Polish priests. From 1940 to 1945, 2,800 Polish ecclesiastics and religious were imprisoned in that camp; among them was the Auxiliary bishop of Włocławek, who died there of typhus. In April last there were left only 816, all the others being dead except for two or three transferred to another camp. In the summer of 1942, 480 German-speaking ministers of religion were known to be gathered there; of these, 45 were Protestants, all the others Catholic priests. In spite of the continuous inflow of new internees, especially from some dioceses of Bavaria, Rhenania and Westphalia, their number, as a result of the high rate of mortality, at the beginning of this year, did not surpass 350. Nor should we pass over in silence those belonging to occupied territories, Holland, Belgium, France (among whom the Bishop of Clermont), Luxembourg, Slovenia, Italy. Many of those priests and laymen endured indescribable sufferings for their faith and for their vocation. In one case the hatred of the impious against Christ reached the point of parodying on the person of an interned priest, with barbed wire, the scourging and the crowning with thorns of our Redeemer.

The generous victims who during the twelve years since 1933 have in Germany sacrificed for Christ and His Church their pos-

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Accordingly We confidently issue an ardent appeal for prayer to Our sons and daughters of the whole world. May it reach all those who recognize in God the beloved Father of all men created to His image and likeness, to all who know that in the breast of Christ there beats a divine Heart rich in mercy, deep and inexhaustible fountain of all good and all love, of all peace and all reconciliation.

From the cessation of hostilities to true and genuine peace, as We warned not long ago, the road will be long and arduous, too long for the pent-up aspirations of mankind starving for order and calm. But it is inevitable that it should be so. It is even perhaps better thus. It is essential that the tempest of over-excited passions be first let subside: *motos praestat componere fluctus* (Virgil, *Aeneid*, 1, 135). It is essential that the hate, the diffidence, the stimuli of an extreme nationalism should give way to the growth of wise counsels, the flowering of peaceful designs, to serenity in the interchange of views and to mutual brotherly comprehension.

May the Holy Sprit, light of intellects, gentle Ruler of hearts deign to hear the prayers of His Church and guide in their arduous work those who, in accordance with their mandate, are striving sincerely, despite obstacles and contradictions, to reach the goal so universally, so ardently desired: peace, a peace worthy of the name; a peace built and consolidated in sincerity and loyalty, in justice and reality; a peace of loyal and resolute force to overcome or preclude those economic and social conditions which might, as they did in the past, easily lead to new conflicts; a peace that can be approved by all right-minded men of every people and every nation; a peace which future generations may regard gratefully as the happy outcome of a sad period; a peace that may stand out in the centuries as a resolute advance in the affirmation of human dignity and of ordered liberty; a peace that may be like the *Magna Charta* which closed the dark age of violence; a peace that, under the merciful guidance of God, may let us so pass through temporal prosperity that we may not lose eternal happiness (cfr. *Collect, Third Sunday after Pentecost*).

But before reaching this peace, it still remains true that mil-

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lions of men at their own fireside or in battle, in prison or in exile must still drink their bitter chalice. How We long to see the end of their sufferings and anguish, the realization of their hopes! For them, too, and for all mankind, that suffers with them, may Our humble and ardent prayer ascend to Almighty God.

Meanwhile, Venerable Brethren, We are immensely comforted by the thought that you share Our anxieties, Our prayers, Our hopes; and that throughout the world bishops, priests and faithful are joining their supplications to Ours in the great chorus of the Universal Church. In testimony of Our deep gratitude and as a pledge of infinite mercies and divine favours, with sincere affection We impart to you, to them, to all who join Us in desiring and working for peace, Our Apostolic Benediction.

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sessions, their freedom, their lives, are raising their hands to God in expiatory sacrifice. May the just Judge accept it in reparation for the many crimes committed against mankind no less than against the present and future generation and especially against the unfortunate youth of Germany, and may He at last stay the arm of the exterminating Angel.

With ever-increasing persistence National-Socialism strove to denounce the Church as the enemy of the German people. The manifest injustice of the accusation would have deeply offended the sentiment of German Catholics and Our own, if it had come from other lips. But on the lips of such accusers, so far from being a grievance, the accusation is the clearest and most honourable testimony to the strong, incessant opposition maintained by the Church to such disastrous doctrines and methods, in the interest of true civilization and of the German people; to that people We offer the wish that, freed now from the error which plunged it into chaos, it may find again its own salvation at the pure fountains of true peace and true happiness, at the fountains of truth, humility and charity flowing with the Church from the Heart of Christ.

II – Looking to the Future

A hard-learnt lesson surely, that of these past years! God grant at least that it may have been understood, and be profitable to other nations! " Receive instruction, you that judge the earth! " (*Ps.* 2, 10). That is the most ardent wish of all who sincerely love mankind. For mankind, now the victim of an impious process of exhaustion, of cynical disregard for the life and rights of man, has but one aspiration : to lead a tranquil and pacific life in dignity and honest toil.

And to this purpose it hopes that an end will be put to that insolence with which the family and the domestic hearth have been abused and profaned during the war-years. For that insolence cries to heaven and has evolved into one of the gravest perils not only for religion and morality, but also for harmonious relations between men. It has, above all, created those mobs of dispossessed, disillusioned, disappointed and hopeless men who are going to

swell the ranks of revolution and disorder, in the pay of a tyranny no less despotic than those for whose overthrow men planned.

The nations—and notably the medium and small nations—claim the right to take their destinies into their own hands. They can be led to assume, with their full and willing consent, in the interest of common progress, obligations which will modify their sovereign rights. But after having sustained their share—their large share—of suffering in order to overthrow a system of brutal violence, they are entitled to refuse to accept a new political or cultural system which is decisively rejected by the great majority of their people.

They maintain, and with reason, that the primary task of the peaceframers is to put an end to the criminal war-game and to safeguard vital rights and mutual obligations as between great and small, powerful and weak.

Deep in their hearts the peoples feel that their rulers would be discredited if they did not succeed in supplanting the mad folly of the rule of violence by the victory of right. The thought of a new peace-organization is inspired—nobody could doubt it— by the most sincere and loyal good-will. The whole of mankind follows the progress of this noble enterprise with anxious interest. What a bitter disillusionment it would be if it were to fail, if so many years of suffering and self-sacrifice were to be made vain, by permitting again to prevail that spirit of oppression from which the world hoped to see itself at last freed once and for all! Poor world, to which then might be applied the words of Christ : its new state is become worse than that from which it has with such labour extricated itself! (cfr. *Luke* 11, 24-26).

The present political and social situation suggests these words of warning to Us. We have had, alas, to deplore, in more than one region, the murder of priests, deportations of civilians, the killing of citizens without trial or in personal vendetta. No less sad is the news that has reached Us from Slovenia and Croatia.

But We will not lose heart. The speeches made by competent and responsible men in the course of the last few weeks make it clear that they are aiming at the triumph of right, not merely as a political goal but even more as a moral duty.

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Edmund A. Walsh

Document No. 3268-PS
OFFICE OF U. S. CHIEF OF COUNSEL

EXCERPTS FROM ALLOCUTION OF HIS HOLINESS
POPE PIUS XII
TO THE SACRED COLLEGE
June 2nd, 1945

Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana
1945
(pp. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)
(A public address of Pope Pius XII reported in newspapers of the world on 3 June 1945)

*** For over twelve years - twelve of the best years of Our mature age - We had lived in the midst of the German people, fulfilling the duties of the office committed to Us. During that time, in the atmosphere of liberty which the political and social conditions of that time allowed Us, We worked for the consolidation of the status of the Catholic Church in Germany. We thus had occasion to learn the great qualities of that people and We were personally in close contact with its most representative men. For that reason We cherish the hope that it can rise to new dignity and new life when once it has laid the satanic spectre raised by National-Socialism and the guilty (as We have already, at other times had occasion to expound) have expiated the crimes they have committed.

While there was still some faint glimmer of hope that that movement could take another and less disastrous course, either through the disillusionment of its more moderate members or through effective opposition from that section of the German people which opposed it, the Church did everything possible to set up a formidable barrier to the spread of ideas at once subversive and violent.

In spring 1933 the German Government asked the Holy See to conclude a Concordat with the Reich: the proposal had the approval of the Episcopate and of at least the greater number of German Catholics. In fact they thought that neither the Concordats up to then negotiated with some individual German States (Länder) nor the Weimar Constitution gave adequate guarantee or assurance of respect for their convictions, for their faith, rights or liberty of action. In such conditions the guarantees could not be secured except through a settlement having the solemn form of a Concordat with the Central Government of the Reich. It should be added that, since it was the Government that made the proposal, the responsibility for all regrettable consequences would have fallen on the Holy See, if it had refused the proposed Concordat.

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The struggle against the Church did, in fact, become ever more bitter: there was the dissolution of Catholic organizations; the gradual suppression of the flourishing Catholic schools, both public and private; the enforced weaning of youth from family and Church; the pressure brought to bear on the conscience of citizens, and especially of civil servants; the systematic defamation, by means of a clever, closely-organized propaganda, of the Church, the clergy, the faithful, the Church's institutions,

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To resist such attacks millions of courageous Catholics, men and women, closed their ranks around their bishops, whose valiant and severe pronouncements never failed to resound even in these last years of war. These Catholics gathered around their priests to help them adapt their ministry to the ever-changing needs and conditions. And, right up to the end, they set up against the forces of impiety and pride their forces of faith, prayer, and openly Catholic behaviour and education.

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12. Pages
1 Cover & a certificate